



ALEXANDRIA:

WEDNESDAY MORNING, JANUARY 9, 1861.

CONGRESS.—Neither House of Congress was in session yesterday, having adjourned over on Monday, until to-day, in honor of the anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans.

VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE.—On Monday, in the Senate, after the reading of the Governor's Message, very decided resolutions against the coercion of a seceding State were offered by Mr. Douglass, and ordered to be printed. In the House of Delegates, a committee appointed for the purpose, reported very decided resolutions (see report of proceedings) against the power of the Federal Government to coerce a seceding State or States, and pledging Virginia to resist with all her means any such attempt by the Federal Government so to coerce a seceding sister State. These resolutions were passed by a vote of 112 yeas to 5 nays. The House, also, passed a resolution instructing a select committee promptly to bring in a bill providing for the calling of a Convention of the people to consider the exigencies of the country.

We do not know what degree of credit is to be given to the accounts in the newspapers, of the proceedings of the caucus of the Republican members of Congress, held last Saturday, when the proposition of the Border States were rejected. If approaching correctness, no wonder the fate of the Union is sealed. Lovejoy, of Illinois, is represented to have been characteristically furious against all conciliation, impudently quoting scripture, as is the worst of such fanatics.—Grow, of Pa., Hickman, Chase, &c., are said to have opposed all efforts at compromise.—If the R-republican depended upon such men, its doom would be certain. Nor would there be a conservative man left to regret its fall.—Any thing would be preferable to the domination of such miserable wretches. Thank God! however, we still hope they are but the "flies on the wheel."

The National Intelligencer "deprecates any action on the part of the Federal Government which would have for its effect to intensify and widen the spirit of resistance which animate a portion of the Southern mind." Conservative men, must every where, come to the conclusion, that coercion, threats, and all that, will do nothing but harm. Such things will not cure the past, nor prevent what is intended. Nay, they would be certain to render "resistance" unanimous and determined—and, in that case, the Southern States need not fear any power brought against them. If the Union can be honorably saved or honorably restored—let it be done—and that it may be done we fervently hope and pray—but if it cannot be done—let the separation be peaceful, if possible.

The Baltimore American discusses the "expense of the crisis" as it will fall on, and have to be borne at, the North. Besides its manufacturing establishments, its hotel property, its railroads, its merchants, its mechanics have all yet to suffer. If Disunion continues who can estimate the loss to the North? The crisis, which is doing all the harm, has been a pet beast with some of these Northern traders for a dozen years; and hitherto his expensiveness has not been felt or demonstrated.

Rev. James A. Duncan, a distinguished preacher of the Methodist Church, South, delivered an eloquent sermon on Friday last, in Richmond, in which, it is said, after arousing the feelings of his auditory to the highest pitch, he declared, in a climax of lofty fervor, that, "should the arbitrament of battle be forced upon us, he would glory in lifting his voice at the head of Virginia's columns in a triumphant song of Zion for the safety of our families and our homes."

The Charleston Mercury declares for war. It says that in holding Fort Sumter and in attempting to collect the United States revenue in the harbor of Charleston, the government makes war against South Carolina. It says this will be met with war, and "Yankee commerce will be made the spoils of our privateers." And in this way, the direct calamity that can befall a people is hurried on.

Every day and every hour that the Northern States, Senators, Representatives, and people, delay in, or hold back from, coming to an amicable and fair adjustment of difficulties, by doing justice to the South, and giving guarantees for future peace, increases the Secession feeling in the South, and renders more certain the entire dissolution of the Union, and the establishment of two or more confederacies.

ANOTHER STATE HAS SECEDED! Another star is stricken from the flag of our country. The telegraphic dispatch from Tallahassee, published in yesterday's Gazette, announced that the Convention of Florida has passed a resolution to the effect that it was the right and duty of the State to secede, by a vote of 62 to 5—and the Ordinance of Secession was then adopted.

The Pennsylvania, warmly opposed to Senator Douglass during the late Presidential election, publishes the recent speech of the Senator, "as the rallying cry of the Northern Democracy and Northern conservatives, whatever their Presidential preferences may have been."

Hon. Wm. Smith has been detained from his seat in the House of Representatives, for some days past, in consequence of indisposition. He will, probably, resume his duties in a day or two.

NEWS OF THE DAY.

"To show the very age and body of the times."

The House Committee of Thirty-three, on Monday, had under consideration Mr. Winter Davis' amendment to the Fugitive Slave Law. An amendment, offered by Mr. Washburn, of Wisconsin, guaranteeing a trial by jury in the State where the fugitive was seized, was rejected by a vote of 8 against 10. Mr. Davis' amendment was then adopted, guaranteeing a trial by jury in the State where the fugitive escaped.

The Republican says of the Cabinet announced for Mr. Lincoln, by the New York Tribune:—"The statement of the Tribune does not rest upon any information which justifies the positive manner in which it is made; but still, the line of policy as respects the South, which such appointments would indicate, has unquestionably been resolved upon at Springfield. Three of the Cabinet officers will be given to the South."

We see the following significant paragraph in the accounts from Charleston:—"The rich people of the State are called upon to take the new State loan of \$400,000, and some coercion may be used if there is any halt in subscribing. Most of the sum, however, will be taken willingly, but the rich who do not help the State pecuniarily will be marked."

Petitions are circulating in New York State, asking for a re-enactment of an old State law, allowing citizens of Southern States to have slaves with them, in the State, for nine months. Gov. Packer has recommended to the Pennsylvania Legislature a re-enactment of its old six months' law, protecting slaves for six months, while sojourning with their masters.

The last communication from the South Carolina Commissioners was returned by the President, with the comment that it was not a proper communication to be addressed to him; in it the Commissioners directly impugn the good faith of the President, and charge him with provoking a war with South Carolina.

The Charleston Courier indignantly repudiates the idea that a mob is included among the peculiar institutions of the Palmetto State. According to the Courier's logic, a crowd has only to be "too large for any resistance" to escape the imputation of being a mob.

A Cincinnati speaker, addressing a late meeting in that city, made the remark that there is no large city in any country on the borders of another nationality, and predicted that, if civil war ensues, the prosperity of Cincinnati will be entirely destroyed.

A letter from Charleston, (S. C.) in the New York Post, says there need be no apprehension of repudiation. The Southern people will certainly pay their bills as soon as possible, but they owe more to their own banks than to the Northern people.

A St. Louis despatch, dated the 6th, says that "the friends of W. H. Russell residing in Lafayette county, Missouri, have signed bonds amounting to a million dollars, which will be tendered to the Federal authorities for his release from prison."

Gordon, the New Orleans burglar, whose desperate wounding and subsequent escape from the hospital we have mentioned, was recaptured on Friday night last, in an untenanted house, where he had taken refuge.

A Maine correspondent of the Boston Journal has declared that the "movement in certain free States to repeal their personal liberty laws, will not be imitated" in that State.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean are coming to the United States. An entire new company of Paris actors and actresses came over in the Fulton, and the French Theatre in New York will soon open for the season.

Two men, named Babb and Williamson, were seriously, and it is thought fatally, wounded by the explosion of a cannon, with which they were firing a salute to Major Anderson, at Williamsport, Pa.

The Star of the West has cleared at New York for New Orleans, and if she has any troops on board, is probably taking them to the fortifications at the mouth of the Mississippi.

William Kent, son of the famous chancellor, and himself a lawyer of high reputation, died at his residence in Fishkill, N. Y., on the 4th instant.

Thurlow Weed, esq., reached Washington city on Saturday afternoon last.

SECESSION AND WAR! SECESSION AND WAR! NOW AND FOR A SHORT TIME ONLY! NOW AND FOR A SHORT TIME ONLY!

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As the season is rather advanced, we offer a beautiful VARIETY OF SHAWLS AND CLOAKS, VARIETY OF SHAWLS AND CLOAKS.

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ROBERT BELL, Agent, CHINA AND JAPAN, being a Narrative of the Cruise of the U. S. S. Albatross, under the command of Lieut. John Rodgers, U. S. N., late Executive Officer of the Powhatan, price \$1.00. Just published and for sale by ROBERT BELL.

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Evidence of the most reliable and responsible character, is at hand to prove the virtues of this MEDICINE. All communications will receive prompt attention. A postage stamp must be sent to pay return postage. My address is Glenmore, Va. W. C. WILKINSON, Glenmore, Buckingham Co., Va. dec 18—wlm

FOR SALE.—A desirable farm containing about 500 ACRES, situated in Stuart County, on the Rapid Ann River, about 34 miles from Ellis Mills. Terms reasonable as to amount and time. Apply to LEWIS ELLIS.

Pine View, P. O., Fauquier, co., Aug 2—Zawif

CORRESPONDENCE.

Between the President and the Commissioners of South Carolina.

The Commissioners to the President.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 28, 1860. SIR: We have the honor to transmit to you a copy of the full powers from the Convention of the people of South Carolina, under which we are "authorized and empowered to treat with the Government of the United States for the delivery of the forts, magazines, light-houses, and other real estate, with their appurtenances, in the limits of South Carolina; and also for a division of all other property held by the Government of the United States as agent of the Confederate States of which South Carolina was recently a member, and generally to negotiate as to all other measures and arrangements proper to be made and adopted in the existing relation of the parties, and for the continuance of peace and amity between this Commonwealth and the Government at Washington."

In the execution of this trust it is our duty to furnish you, as we now do, with an official copy of the Ordinance of secession by which the State of South Carolina has resumed the powers she delegated to the Government of the United States, and has declared her perfect sovereignty and independence.

It would also have been our duty to have informed you that we were ready to negotiate with you upon all such questions as are necessarily raised by the adoption of this Ordinance, and that we were prepared to enter upon this negotiation with the earnest desire to avoid all unnecessary and hostile collision, and so to inaugurate our new relations as to secure mutual respect, general advantage, and a future of good will and harmony beneficial to all the parties concerned. But the events of the last twenty-four hours render such an assurance impossible.

We came here the representatives of an authority which could, at any time within the past fifty days, have taken possession of the forts in Charleston harbor, but which, upon pledges given in a manner that we cannot doubt, determined to trust to your honor rather than to our own power. Since our arrival here an officer of the United States, acting as we are assured, not only without, but against your orders, has dismantled one fort and occupied another, thus altering, to a most important extent, the condition of affairs under which we came. Until these circumstances are explained in a manner which relieves us of all doubt as to the spirit in which these negotiations shall be conducted, we are forced to suspend all discussion as to any arrangements by which our mutual interests might be amicably adjusted.

And, in conclusion, we would urge upon you the immediate withdrawal of the troops from the harbor of Charleston. Under present circumstances they are a standing menace which renders negotiation impossible, and, as our recent experience shows, tend to excite passions which lead to collision. We possess the power to change the situation, but we prefer to change it by temperance and judgment. We have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servants, R. W. BARNWELL, Com'rs. J. H. ADAMS, JAMES L. ORR.

To the President of the United States.

The President to the Commissioners.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 30, 1860. GENTLEMEN: I have had the honor to receive your communication of the 28th inst., together with a copy of "your full powers from the Convention of the people of South Carolina," authorizing you to treat with the Government of the United States on various important subjects therein mentioned, and also a copy of the Ordinance, bearing date on the 20th instant, declaring that "the Union now subsisting between South Carolina and other States, under the name of the United States of America, is hereby dissolved."

In answer to this communication, I have to say that my position as President of the United States was clearly defined in the message to Congress on the 3d instant. In that I stated that "apart from the execution of the laws, so far as this may be practicable, the Executive has no authority to decide what shall be the relations between the Federal Government and South Carolina. He has been invested with no such discretion. He possesses the power to change the relations heretofore existing between them, much less to acknowledge the independence of that State. This would be to invest a mere executive officer with the power of recognizing the dissolution of the Confederacy among our thirty-three sovereign States. It bears no resemblance to the recognition of a foreign de facto Government, involving no such responsibility. Any attempt to do this would, on his part, be a naked act of usurpation. It is, therefore, my duty to submit to Congress the whole question in all its bearings."

Such is my opinion still. I could, therefore, meet you only as private gentlemen of the highest character, and was entirely willing to communicate to Congress any proposition you might have made to make to that body upon the subject. Of this you were well aware. It was my earnest desire that such a disposition might be made of the whole subject by Congress, who alone possess the power, as to prevent the inauguration of a civil war between the parties in regard to the possession of the Federal forts in the harbor of Charleston, and I therefore deeply regret that, in your opinion, "the events of the last twenty-four hours render this impossible."

In conclusion, you urge upon me "the immediate withdrawal of the troops from the harbor of Charleston," stating that "under present circumstances they are a standing menace, which renders negotiation impossible, and, as our recent experience shows, tend to excite passions which lead to collision. We possess the power to change the situation, but we prefer to change it by temperance and judgment."

The reason for this change in your position is, that since your arrival in Washington "an officer of the United States, acting as we (you) are assured, not only without, but against your (my) orders, has dismantled one fort and occupied another—thus altering to a most important extent the condition of affairs under which we (you) came." You also allege that you came here "the representatives of an authority which could, at any time within the past sixty days, have taken possession of the forts in Charleston harbor, but which, upon pledges given in a manner that we (you) cannot doubt, determined to trust to your (my) honor rather than to our power."

This brings me to a consideration of the nature of those alleged pledges, and in what manner they have been observed. In my message of the 3d of December last, I stated, in regard to the property of the United States in South Carolina, that it "has been purchased for a fair equivalent, by the consent of the Legislature of the State," for the erection of forts, magazines, arsenals, &c., and over these the authority of the United States has been expressly granted by the Constitution to Congress. It is not believed that any attempt will be made to expel the United States from this property by force; but if in this I should prove to be mistaken, the officer in command of the forts has received orders to act strictly on the defensive. In such a contingency the responsibility for consequences would rightfully rest upon the heads of the assailants.

This being the condition of the parties, on

Saturday, 8th of December, four of the Representatives from South Carolina called upon me and requested an interview. We had an earnest conversation on the subject of these forts, and the best means of preventing a collision between the parties, for the purpose of sparing the effusion of blood. I suggested, for prudential reasons, that it would be best to put in writing what they said to me verbally. They did accordingly, and on Monday morning, the 10th inst., three of them presented to me a paper signed by all the Representatives from South Carolina, with a single exception, of which the following is a copy:

WASHINGTON, 7TH DECEMBER, 1860. To His Excellency James Buchanan.

President of the United States: In compliance with our statement to you yesterday, we now express to you our strong convictions that neither the constituted authorities, nor any body of the people of South Carolina, will either attack or molest the United States forts in the harbor of Charleston, previously to the action of the Convention, and we hope and believe not until an offer has been made through an accredited representative to negotiate for an amicable arrangement of all matters between the State and the Federal Government, provided that no reinforcements shall be sent into those forts, and their relative military status shall remain as at present.

JOHN McQUEEN, M. L. BOWMAN, W. W. BOWEN, LAWRENCE M. KEITT.

And here I must, in justice to myself, remark that at the time the paper was presented to me I objected to the word "provided," as it might be construed into an agreement on my part which I never would make.—They said that nothing was farther from their intention; they did not so understand it, and I should not so consider it. It is evident they could enter into no reciprocal agreement with me on the subject. They did not profess to have the authority to do this and were acting in their individual character. I considered it as nothing more, in effect, than the promise of highly honorable gentlemen to exert their influence for the purpose expressed. It is evident that they have faithfully kept this promise, although I have never since received a line from any one of them, or from any member of the Convention on the subject. It is well known that it was my determination, and this I freely expressed, not to reinforce the forts in the harbor, and thus produce a collision, until they had been actually attacked, or until I had certain evidence that they were about to be attacked. This paper I received most cordially, and considered it as a happy omen that peace might be still preserved, and that there might be thus given for reflection. This is the whole foundation for the alleged pledge.

But I acted in the same manner as I would have done had I entered into a positive and formal agreement with parties capable of contracting, although such an agreement would have been on my part, from the nature of my official duties, impossible.—The world knows that I have never sent any reinforcements to the forts in Charleston harbor, and I have certainly never authorized any change to be made in their relative military status. Bearing upon this subject, I refer you to an order issued by the Secretary of War, on the 11th instant, to Major Anderson, but not brought to my notice until the 21st instant. It is as follows:

"Memorandum of verbal instructions to Major Anderson, First Artillery, commanding Fort Moultrie, South Carolina. 'You are aware of the great anxiety of the Secretary of War that a collision of the troops with the people of this State shall be avoided, and of his studied determination to pursue a course with reference to the military force and forts in this harbor which shall be consistent with the maintenance of peace, and therefore, carefully abstain from increasing the force at this point, or taking any measures which might lead to the present excited state of the public mind, or which would throw any doubt on the confidence he feels that South Carolina will not attempt by violence to obtain possession of the public works, or interfere with their occupancy.'"

"But, as the counsel and acts of rash and impulsive persons, may possibly disappoint these expectations of the Government, he deems it proper that you should be prepared with instructions to meet any such contingency. He has, therefore, directed me verbally to give you such instructions."

"You are carefully to avoid every act which would needlessly tend to provoke aggression, and for that reason you are not without necessity, to take up any position which could be construed into the assumption of a hostile attitude; but you are to hold possession of the forts in this harbor, and, if attacked, you are to defend yourself to the last extremity. The smallness of your force will not permit you, perhaps, to occupy more than one of the three forts, but an attack on, or attempt to take possession of either of them, will be regarded as an act of hostility, and you may then put your command into either of them which you may deem most proper to increase its power of resistance. You are also authorized to take similar steps whenever you have tangible evidence of a design to proceed to a hostile act."

D. P. BUCKLER, "Assistant Adjutant-General." "FORT MOULTRIE, (S. C.) Dec. 11, 1860. "This is in conformity to my instructions to Major Bull."

"John B. Floyd, Secretary of War." These were the last instructions transmitted to Major Anderson before his removal to Fort Sumter, with a single exception, in regard to a particular which does not in any degree affect the present question.

Under these circumstances it is clear that Major Anderson acted upon his own responsibility, and without authority, unless, indeed, he had "tangible evidence" of a design to proceed to a hostile act "on the part of the authorities of South Carolina, which has not yet been alleged." Still he is a brave and honorable officer, and justice requires that he should not be condemned without a fair hearing.

Be this as it may, when I learned that Major Anderson had left Fort Moultrie and proceeded to Fort Sumter my first promptings were to command him to return to his former position, and there to await the contingencies presented in his instructions.—This could only have been done with any degree of safety to the command by the concurrence of the South Carolina authorities. But before any such step could possibly have been taken in this direction we received information that the "Palmetto flag" floated out to the breeze at Castle Pickens, and a large military force went over last night (the 27th) to Fort Moultrie. Thus the authorities of South Carolina, without waiting or asking for any explanations, and doubtless believing, as you have expressed it, that the officer had acted not only without but against my orders, on the very next day after the night when the removal was made, seized by a military force, two of the three Federal forts in the harbor of Charleston, and have covered them under their own flag, instead of that of the United States.

At this point, permit me to state, that the very day, the 27th instant, that possession of these two forts was taken, the Palmetto flag was raised over the Federal custom house and post office in Charleston; and on the same day every officer of the customs—Collector, Naval Officer, Surveyor, and Appraiser—resigned their offices. And this, although it was well known from the lan-

guage of my message, that as an Executive officer I felt myself bound to collect the revenue at the port of Charleston under the existing laws. In the harbor of Charleston we now find three forts confronting each other, over all of which the Federal flag floats only four days ago; but now, over two of them, this flag has been supplanted, and the Palmetto flag has been substituted in its stead.

It is under these circumstances that I am urged immediately to withdraw the troops from the harbor of Charleston, and am informed that without this, negotiation is impossible. This I cannot do; this I will not do. Such an idea was never thought of by me, in any possible contingency. No such allusion had been made in any communication between myself and any human being. But the inference is, that I am bound to withdraw the troops from the only fort remaining in the possession of the United States; and the last of Charleston, because the officer there in command of all the forts thought proper, without instructions, to change his position from one of them to another.

At this point of writing, I have received information by telegraph, from Capt. Humphreys, in command of the Arsenal at Charleston, that "it has to-day (Sunday, the 30th) been taken by force of arms." It is estimated that the munitions of war belonging to the United States in this arsenal are worth half a million of dollars.

Concomitant to this, after this information, I have only to add that, whilst it is my duty to defend Fort Sumter, as a portion of the public property of the United States against hostile attacks, from whatever quarter they may come, by such means as I may possess for this purpose, I do not perceive how such a defence can be construed into a menace against the city of Charleston.

With great personal regard, I remain, yours, very respectfully, JAMES BUCHANAN.

To Honorable ROBERT W. BARNWELL, JAMES H. ADAMS, JAMES L. ORR.

[The reply of the Commissioners to the above letter, being the conclusion of the Correspondence, will be published in our next.]

VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE.

The Senate assembled on Monday. In the absence of Lieut. Gov. Montague, the Senate was called to order by Mr. Day, on whose motion Mr. Johnson, of Bedford, was called to the Chair.

The roll was called, and twenty-eight Senators responded to their names. The proclamation of the Governor, convening the General Assembly, was then read by the Clerk.

After the Governor's Message was received and disposed of, Mr. Douglass offered the following joint resolutions, which, under the rules, were laid over.

Resolved by the General Assembly of Virginia, That, in the judgment of this General Assembly, the use of force by the Federal Government, by land or sea, directly or indirectly, for the purpose of maintaining Union among the States of our Confederacy, would of itself be destructive of the true spirit of the federative system, subversive of the ends for which it was constructed, and revolutionary in all its natural and inevitable results.

Resolved, That when any of these States, in the orderly exercise of its sovereign power, shall separate itself from the rest, and resuming the powers heretofore delegated to the Federal Government, at the same time renounces the benefits and obligations of the same, Virginia will not consent that the State so separating itself shall be coerced into re-union, either by the exercise of the war power directly against such State, or by the use of military force against the individual citizens thereof.

Resolved, That Virginia ought to, and will, resist all attempts by the Federal Government to overthrow and destroy the Union, and will regard any forcible measures taken against any of the constituent members, who shall have dissolved their connection with it, as dangerous to her freedom and security, and demanding the most active preparations for defence.

On motion of Mr. Thompson, the Committee of Military Affairs was instructed to report a plan for putting the State in the best possible condition of defence.

On motion of Mr. Wickham, the same committee was instructed to inquire into the expediency of making additional appropriations for the military defences of the State.

Mr. Thomas offered the following, which, on motion of Mr. Douglass was laid upon the table:

Resolved, That so much of the Governor's message as relates to our Federal Relations, is referred to a select committee of fifteen, to be chosen from the fifteen Electoral Districts of the State, by the Senate.

After resolutions of respect to the memorials of Fred. W. Coleman and Alex. Jones, Senators, who have died since the last session, were adopted.—

The Senate adjourned.

The House of Delegates was called to order by Speaker O. M. Crutchfield, who delivered a short, but neat and telling speech. He expressed the sense of his deep appreciation of the important duties which awaited the consideration of the General Assembly, and invoked the patience, calmness, and firmness of each member, charging them to reflect that the eyes of all interested in the affairs of the whole nation were upon them. Virginia demanded the best service of her sons, and he exhorted each member to do his duty, and to be guided by the sense of duty, and not by the passions of the moment. He advised a prompt disposal of all business which might be brought before the Assembly, and at the same time distinctly announced his opinion that the Assembly should remain in continued session until after the 4th of March at least, and so long thereafter as the exigency of the events may demand. A message from the Governor was received.

The vote being taken, 1,500 copies of the Message were ordered to be printed.

The following resolutions were offered by Mr. Bassell, of Upshur:

Resolved, by the General Assembly of Virginia, That the Union being formed by the assent of the States, respectively, and being consistent only with freedom and the Republican institutions guaranteed to each, cannot, and ought not, to be maintained by force. That the Government of the Union has no power to declare or make war against any of the States which have been its constituent members.

That any effort by that Government to coerce any State to re-union or submission, whether under the claim of enforcing the laws against citizens or otherwise should, and will be esteemed by Virginia, from community of interests and relations, as war on her likewise—to be resisted to the utmost of her means and power.

Mr. Robertson, of Richmond city, offered as an amendment to the above: Resolved, That so much of the Governor's Message as refers to the subject of "coercion" by the General Government of a State of the Union, be referred to a committee of fifteen with instruction to report thereon immediately.

The amendment was adopted, and then afterwards the resolution as amended. The following committee was appointed and went into session immediately.—Messrs. Robertson, of Richmond; Bassell, of Upshur; Yerby, of Northampton; Seddon, of Stafford; Hopkins, of Washington; Chapman, of Mount Vernon; and Henry, of Albemarle;

Anderson, of Botetown; Cowan, of Preston; Duckwall, of Morgan; Ball, of Loudoun; Grattan, of Rockingham; Welch, of Carter, of Lancaster.

Mr. Bassell supported his resolution. Mr. Yerby the substitute offered by Mr. Robertson. Mr. Seddon favored speedy action.

Mr. Kemper of Madison offered the following:

Resolved, That a Committee of Fifteen be appointed with instructions to report at the earliest practicable time a bill providing for a Convention of the people of Virginia.

Unanimously adopted, and time taken by the Speaker to appoint the Committee.

Mr. Anderson offered the following: Resolved, That so much of the Governor's Message as relates to the James River and Kanawha Company, be referred to the Committee on Roads and Internal Navigation, with instructions to inquire into the expediency of incorporating the Virginia Canal Company, upon the basis of the excoercory agreement entered into by Messrs. Bell and James River, Brothers & Co., with the said James River Canal Company, on the 1st day of September, 1860. Adopted.

Resolutions of enquiry were offered by Mr. Keen, of reporting a bill for the enactment of a stay law; by the same, of legalizing the suspension of the Banks of the Commonwealth.

The House, at 3 1/2 o'clock, took a recess until 5 o'clock.

Mr. Christian moved to reconsider the resolution appointing a committee with instructions to bring in a bill for a State Convention. He said that the resolution, as passed appeared to commit this House unadvisedly, and without any discussion, to the proposition for a Convention; a proposition the most important perhaps, which it was possible for this House to adopt under existing circumstances, certainly it is a question which ought to be considered deliberately and in a full House representing all of Virginia. The resolution passed this morning in face of the fact that many members had not yet arrived, that the roll had not even been called to ascertain if there was a quorum present, as the Constitution requires to transact any business. It was offered amidst the excited feeling of the exciting question concerning the duty of the State to resist coercion, and as the large committee appointed to consider it was retiring. The attention of the House was not called to it on the general supposition that it was a mere resolution of inquiry as to the expediency of a Convention, not absolutely determining the question in this summary manner.

Mr. Kemper detailed the circumstances connected with the passage of the resolution—thought that all members had been sufficiently warned of its introduction and the purpose by his remarks upon presenting it, and the distinct reading of the resolution. He moved the yeas and nays on Mr. Christian's motion, which resulted as follows—yeas 31, nays 17.

Mr. Robertson, Chairman of the Committee of Fifteen, reported the following resolutions:

1. Resolved by the General Assembly, That the Union being formed by the assent of the States respectively, and being consistent only with freedom and the republican institutions guaranteed to each, cannot and ought not, to be maintained by force.

2. That when any one or more of the States have determined, or shall determine, under existing circumstances, to withdraw from the Union, we are unalterably opposed to any attempt on the part of the Federal Government, to coerce the same into re-union or submission, and that we will resist the same by all the means in our power.

3. That when any one or more of the States have determined, or shall determine, under existing circumstances, to withdraw from the Union, we are unalterably opposed to any attempt on the part of the Federal Government, to coerce the same into re-union or submission, and that we will resist the same by all the means in our power.

Mr. Kemper sustained the resolutions, and Mr. Watts moved to lay on the table and print. Mr. Boreman opposed the adoption of the resolutions in an earnest, if not impressive manner. Mr. Christian called for the reading of the resolutions for purposes of information. They were again read, at the request of Mr. Robertson, of R., who proceeded to explain their meaning according to his understanding.

The resolutions being put on their passage, the roll was called, and they passed—yeas 112, nays 12. Messrs. Boreman, Morris, Porter, Richardson and Watts.

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